REEXAMINATION CERTIFICATE ISSUED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 307

THE PATENT IS HEREBY AMENDED AS INDICATED BELOW.

Matter enclosed in heavy brackets [ ] appeared in the patent, but has been deleted and is no longer a part of the patent; matter printed in italics indicates additions made to the patent.

AS A RESULT OF REEXAMINATION, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT:

The patentability of claims **9–16** is confirmed.

Claims **4, 7, and 8** are cancelled.

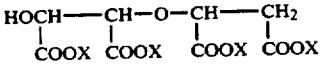
Claims **1–2, 17 and 19** are determined to be patentable as amended.

Claims **3, 5–6, 18 and 20**, dependent on an amended claim, are determined to be patentable.

New claims **21–27** are added and determined to be patentable.

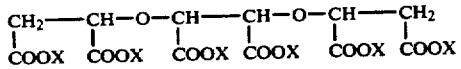
1. An ether carboxylate composition suitable for use as a builder in detergent formulations, said composition [comprising] *consisting essentially of*

(a) from about [1% to 99%] *20% to 97%* by weight of a tartrate monosuccinate component of the structure:



wherein X is H or a salt-forming cation; and

(b) from about [1% to 99%] *3% to 80%* by weight of a tartrate disuccinate component of the structure:



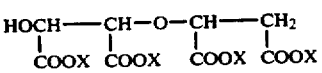
wherein X is H or a salt-forming cation;

the weight ratio of the tartrate monosuccinate component to the tartrate disuccinate component ranging from about 89:11 to 44:56.

2. A composition according claim **1** wherein the weight ratio of tartrate monosuccinate component to tartrate disuccinate component ranges from about [97:3 to 20:80] *82:18 to 50:50.*

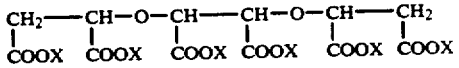
17. A detergent composition comprising from about 0.5% to 98% by weight of a surfactant and from about 2% to 99.5% by weight of a builder component [selected from the group] consisting *essentially* of

(a) tartrate monosuccinic acid, or salt thereof, of the structure



wherein X is H or a salt-forming cation; *and*

(b) tartrate disuccinic acid, or salt thereof, of the structure;



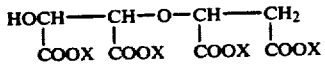
wherein X is H or a salt-forming cation, [or

(c) a combination of said tartrate monosuccinic acid or salt and said tartrate disuccinic acid or salt,] in a weight ratio of tartrate monosuccinic acid or salt, to tartrate disucinnic acid or salt, of from about [97:3 to 20:80] *89:11 to 44:56.*

19. A laundry additive composition comprising

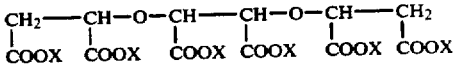
(A) from about 2% to 99.5% by weight of a builder component [selected from the group] consisting *essentially* of

(i) tartrate monosuccinic acid, or salt thereof, of the structure



wherein X is H or a salt-forming cation; *and*

(ii) tartrate disuccinic acid, or salt thereof, of the structure



wherein X is H or a salt-forming cation; [or

(iii) a combination of said tartrate monosuccinic acid or salt and said tartrate disuccinic acid or salt,] in a weight ratio of tartrate monosuccinic acid or salt, to tartrate disuccinate acid or salt, of from about [97:3 to 20:80] *89:11 to 44:56*; and

(B) from about 0.5% to 98% by weight of a laundry adjuvant selected from the group consisting of surfactants, additional detergent builders, chelating agents, enzymes, fabric whiteners and brighteners, sudsing control agents, solvents, hydrotropes, bleaching agents, bleach precursors, buffering agents, soil removal/anti-redeposition agents, soil release agents, fabric softening agents, perfumes, colorants, opacifiers and combinations of said laundry adjuvants.

21. A process for preparing a combination of ether carboxylates useful as a detergent builder, which method comprises

(a) forming an aqueous reaction mixture from about 40% to 60% by weight of both calcium and monovalent cation salts of maleic acid and tartaric acid, said mixture corresponding to the overneutralized mixture which is formed by combining:

(i) maleic and tartaric acids in a maleic to tartaric molar ratio of from about 0.5:1 to about 8:1;

(ii) a source of calcium cations in an amount such that the molar ratio of calcium to tartaric acid ranges from about 0.5:1 to 2.0:1 with the ratio of moles of calcium to total moles of maleic and tartaric acid being less than 1; and

(iii) a neutralizing agent comprising an hydroxide of a monovalent cation in an amount such that the ratio of moles of monovalent cation to moles of maleic acid plus moles of tartaric acid minus moles of calcium ranges from about 2.1:1 to 3.8:1 and